

THE LACLEDE BLADE

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Entered at the Laclede postoffice for transmission through the mails as second class matter.

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1909.

FROM THE NATIONAL CAPITOL

Our Special Correspondent Writes Entertainingly of Things at Washington

The test vote taken on the income tax question in the senate this week, is believed to foreshadow a victory for the republican leaders in their plan to refer both the Bailey and Cummins amendments to the judiciary committee. The vote to defer consideration of the income tax amendments until June 10 means that no amendments to provide for special taxes will be taken up by the senate until the schedules of the tariff bill are adopted, and it is the intention, of course of the finance committee to show that the new customs duties will raise sufficient revenue to support the government and that any special tax is wholly unnecessary.

The sensational character of the dispatches sent out from Washington concerning certain defective armor plates which have been found in the construction of the battleships North Dakota and Delaware, is greatly depreciated by the officials at the navy department. They explain that defective plates always are and always have been found from time to time; and that it is not known what causes the blisters and, therefore, it has been impossible thus far to prevent their occasional occurrence. It has been the custom, heretofore, merely to reject the plates when found defective, without saying anything about it, but recently the department has adopted a new policy. As nothing was to be gained by secrecy no effort is now made to conceal the fact that such defective plates have been found and rejected, although the first information to reach the public has received wholly unwarranted prominence.

Representative Hayes has acted on the suggestion made by President Taft recently at a dinner tendered by a number of Washington business men, in introducing a resolution in the house this week providing for the restoration to the District of Columbia of the land which was ceded to Virginia in 1846, and which prior to that time had been a part of the District of Columbia. This land comprises many thousands of acres in Alexandria county, across the Potomac river from Washington, and is used chiefly for agricultural purposes, although the town of Alexandria is included. Mr. Hayes' resolution provides that this land be again made part of the district, except the town of Alexandria, and authorizes the president to open negotiations through the war department and to complete the transfer by July 1, 1910, and authorizes an appropriation of \$100,000 for the transaction. In his address to the business men the president expressed the opinion that the act of congress in ceding the land to Virginia was unconstitutional and that the District of Columbia should regain it. Mr. Hayes' resolution has been referred to the District of Columbia committee and will not be acted on until the next session, but Representative Hayes believes that President Taft's interest in the plan will insure its passage.

President Taft and Secretary Knox are not a little disturbed over the reports which reach them of conditions in Cuba. It seems that the new Cuban government is just awakening to its freedom from American restraint and is in a fair

way to muddle the finances of the island if it does not precipitate a national bankruptcy. The government is devoting its energies to the indulgence of varied and numerous extravagances while making small effort to supply the treasury of the island with funds. Those familiar with Cuban affairs know that unless this epoch of extravagance is soon checked it will precipitate a situation such as to cause the foreign creditors of Cuba to turn to the United States for assistance, making necessary another assumption of authority over the island. President Taft considers the situation down there far from satisfactory and is much concerned over it.

The action of Senator Bailey in so far forgetting himself as to indulge in a fistie encounter with a Washington representative of a metropolitan daily is much censured throughout official circles, and by his conduct he has completely justified the expectations of those who have long believed that with brass knuckles and a blackjack he could down any man his size, provided he could succeed first in hitting him from behind. This is not the first demonstration that Mr. Bailey has given of his inability to control his temper and while such outbursts are always seriously deplored by his colleagues, they injure no one but the Texan who has thereby impaired his standing almost hopelessly.

President Taft will have conferred on him, on June 3, honorary membership in the first blue lodge of Masons, composed entirely of Americans in Great Britain, and the president says that on the occasion of the opening of the new lodge he will send a cable message of congratulation.

A Charitable View

In charity it may be said that the democratic senators whose obstinacy and folly hindered the success of the forty-fifth general assembly were actuated by the delusion that the people were off guard when a republican was elected governor last year, and that, in politics, Missourians are nothing if not democratic. That they were deluded is a better conclusion than that they were stupidly indifferent to the welfare of the state, because it is humiliating to believe that such a body of men could wilfully ignore their duty to the state unless deluded with the belief that the democratic party is the state.

Democrats have so long controlled Missouri that they have come to regard it as their property—as an asset of their party—and to look upon a republican in a state office as an intruder to be hedged about and restrained till he quits his job. They still believe that the election of a republican governor was an accident to be deplored, an unfortunate slip of the feet of the people rather than an advance step in political progress. They can hardly realize that a people long wedded to the slow going, easy methods of the old democratic party and always ready to listen to the vagaries of populism and Bryanism have at last awakened to their own interests, regretted their delusion and determined to avoid the misfortunes of the past.

Yes, let us be charitable. These obstinate democratic senators, like thousands of democrats of the moss-back species who are in sympathy with them, are still deluded. They cannot believe that Missouri is a republican state. We must keep on trying to show them.

Some people can not help but look with suspicion on a boy who washes his neck and blackens the heels of his shoes. It looks like such an unnatural proceedings in a boy.

The People and the Judges

The effort of Hon. Pat Murphy of the sixteenth congressional district to procure congressional cognizance of the interference of the federal courts with the execution of state laws regulating railroad rates is likely to lead to serious steps inside and outside of congress. The lawyers of the St. Joseph bar have appointed a committee to investigate the reflections which have been made upon the official record of Judge John F. Phillips, a democratic jurist, appointed judge of the district court for the western district of Missouri by former President Cleveland. This action was taken to safeguard the reputation of the jurist and to protect his court from any suspicion or prejudice which the remarks made about him in congress and in the newspapers might create, but it also contemplates proper steps in case the charges and insinuations afloat are found to be justified. The attitude and the judicial orders of Judge Smith McPherson, of the federal bench, in the railroad rate cases will be investigated also, but by different methods, perhaps.

The people are very jealous of the rights of a sovereign state to make and to enforce just laws, and are not friendly toward the intervention of federal courts in the interpretation or enforcement of such laws except where it becomes imperative. This feeling against the interference of the federal with the state courts is not encouraged as long as the federal tribunals seek only to do exact justice to all parties concerned. It is natural, however, for the people to demand the cleanest, fairest and most righteous proceedings possible when the federal courts are brought into matters pending in the state courts. If a federal judge oversteps the bounds of his authority or underestimates the rights of the state and her courts, he may expect the severest criticism, if not antagonism.

While republicans have charge of the execution of state laws and are on guard to protect the rights of the people, things must go right or somebody will know the reason why. Governor Hadley, being a lawyer of distinction and feeling disposed to grant the fullest exercise of both federal and state judicial authority, is not apt to be found among those who express mere prejudice concerning the action of a federal court. He knows the law and knows the obligations of the judiciary. We must not expect him to place himself in the position of an obstructionist in any proper legal proceeding affecting matters in his executive jurisdiction, but he certainly will not be deterred from using every means at his command to see that the rights of Missourians and the laws of the state have just as much consideration at the hands of federal courts as the interests of corporations which seek to evade, to avoid or to suspend the statutes enacted by a state legislature, or to set at naught the will of the people as expressed in their laws. He himself sought through the regular channels to get the Missouri rate situation before the interstate commerce commission and before congress, though he did not ask Mr. Murphy to present to congress the matters concerning the federal judges which are now being investigated. Nor has he asked any bar or anybody to take up these matters. His contention is with the courts and the federal authorities, which have the right to look into the legal questions and the equities involved in the railroad rate situation.

The high-ball season never goes out just because the baseball season comes in.

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